

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 02550 250042Z

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C O R R E C T E D C O T Y FOR GARBLED PORTIONS THROUGHOUT

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO BOMBAY MADRAS ON
FEBRUARY 24, 1975. NOW REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO.

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, IN, CH
SUBJ: SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS: SOME BENGALI IMPRESSIONS

REF: A. HONG KONG 1731 B. NEW DELHI 2053 AND PREVIOUS

1. WE AND SOME OTHERS WERE UNPREPARED FOR THE WARMTH AND DEPTH
OF BENGALI EMOTION AND RESPECT SHOWN TO THE RECENTLY DEPARTED
CHINESE PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS ALIKE. WHILE INDIAN OFFICIALS IN
DELHI MAY BE CAUTIOUS (REF B), IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE GOI GAVE
THE GREEN LIGHT TO BOTH THE STATE GOVERNMENT AND THE STATE
CONGRESS PARTY TO BE MORE OSTENTATIOUSLY HOSPITABLE TO THE
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 02550 250042Z

CHINESE THAN TO OTHER VISITING TEAMS, A ROLE IN EXCESS OF THAT

REQUIRED OF A HOST FOR SUCH AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT.

2. FURTHER, THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST), THE KOTNIS MEMORIAL COMMITTEE AND TO SOME EXTENT THE NAXALITE-LEANING, MAOST SYMPATHIZERS ON THE BENGALI LEFT, TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO OPENLY SUPPORT IMPROVED INDO-CHINESE RELATIONS, TO REGISTER PUBLICLY RESPECT AND ADMIRATION FOR WHAT CHINA HAS MANAGED TO DO ECONOMICALLY, AND BY IMPLICATION AT LEAST, TO QUESTION THE CONTINUING NEED FOR THE TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION WHICH PRECLUDES A SERIOUS, PERHAPS MUTUALLY HELPFUL, RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRC.

3. LOCAL SENTIMENT WAS CLEARLY GRATIFIED THAT THE ASIAN CHINESE MANAGED TO DEFEAT THE EUROPEAN WHITES IN MANY FINALS. THE ASIAN BOND IS A NEBULOUS, BUT WE THINK IMPORTANT, ONE WITH ROOTS IN INDIA'S COLONIAL PAST. IT CLEARLY EXCLUDES THE SOVIET UNION, MUCH AS IT TRIES TO PUBLICIZE ITS EURO-ASIAN ETHNIC MAKEUP. AND IT IS MUCH STRONGER THAN THE "SOCIALIST" BOND WHICH UNITED JUST ABOUT ALL THE BEST TEAMS. ETHNICITY OVER IDEOLOGY, IN A WORD.

4. WEST BENGAL, ALONG PERHAPS ONLY WITH KERALA, HAS A HISTORY OF BEING "SOFT" ON CHINA. THE SPLIT IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY WAS IMPORTANT DUE TO THE KERALA AND BENGAL MEMBERS' UNWILLINGNESS TO LABEL CHINA THE AGGRESSOR IN 1962. AND THOSE GROUPS WHICH HAVE BEEN LYING LOW MADE THEMSELVES EVIDENT IN VARIOUS RECEPTIONS TO THE CHINESE TEAM. BUT THE MILIEU FOR THEIR DOING SO WAS CLEARLY LAID BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT, EXPECIALLY THE CHIEF MINISTER WHO AFTER HIS "PROTOCOLARY" MEETING WITH THE CHINESE VICE-MINISTER RUSHED (AHEAD OF SCHEDULE) TO DELHI ALONG WITH PRESIDENT AHMED. WE HAD BEEN TOLD EARLIER BY A MEMBER OF HIS SECRETARIAT, THAT CHIEF MINISTER RAY HAD BEEN SPECIFICALLY CHARGED BY THE PRIME MINISTER TO BE THE ONLY OFFICIAL TO HAVE SUBSTANTIVE TALKS WITH THE CHINESE AND THAT HE SHOULD, TO THE DEGREE POSSIBLE, TRY TO SEE TO IT THAT THE LOCAL CPI (M) AND, INTERESTINGLY, THE CPI LEADERS DIDN'T HAVE PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH THE CHINESE. THE FORMER AT LEAST WERE PRESENT AT SEVERAL RECEPTIONS.

5. IN RAY'S ABSENCE IN DELHI, YOUTH CONGRESS LEADERS ORGANIZED RECEPTIONS FOR THE CHINESE. THIS SERVED TWO FUNCTIONS: ONE TO DIFFUSE WHATEVER THE NAXAL-LEANING AND CPI(M)-YOUTH CADRES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 02550 250042Z

MIGHT TRY TO DO AND, TWO, TO ASSOCIATE THE YOUTH CONGRESS WITH A VERY POPULAR GROUP OF TALENTED ASIAN AND WORLD CHAMPIONS.

6. THE CPI, MEANWHILE, HUFFED AND PUFFED IN ITS PARTY PAPERS ABOUT THE UNSEEMLY HASTE WITH WHICH BENGALIS WERE RUSHING TO PUBLICLY EMBRACE THE CHINESE. LOCAL, BENGALI-LANGUAGE, MASS CIRCULATION, CONSERVATIVE, NATIONALISTIC ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA (300,000 DAILY CIRC.) MADE SUCH A FUSS OVER THE CHINESE, THAT

THE CPI BENGALI-LANGUAGE DAILY DARKLY WONDERED IN WHOSE PAY IT "REALLY" WAS. ALSO WHEN LOCAL PAPERS PLAYED UP THE CHINESE ROLE IN DEFENDING INDIA AGAINST THE CENSURE ATTEMPTS FROM SOME EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (NEW DELHI 2323), THE CPI DAILY SNARLINGLY POINTED OUT (CORRECTLY, APPARENTLY) THAT INDIA'S MAIN SUPPORTER/DEFENDER WAS THE USSR AND THE EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. DELHI'S PATRIOT EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO SUGGEST THAT A SMALL-SCALE, IF ADMITTEDLY UNUSUAL, LOCAL CHINESE-BENGALI SCUFFLE IN CALCUTTA, WAS AN EXPECTED RESULT FROM THE "ARROGANT" AND UNSUFFERABLE MANNER OF THE CHINESE PLAYERS.

7. SOME THOUGHTS FOR DELHI: WHILE IT WAS TRUE THAT BENGALI PROCLIVITIES ARE SUCH THAT IT WAS EASY FOR INDIA TO ORGANIZE, IN CALCUTTA, A WARM, FRIENDLY, CLEARLY SINCERE WELCOME TO THE CHINESE, IT MUST, BY THE SAME TOKEN, BE WORRISOME TO THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP THAT THE YEARS OF ANTI-CHINESE PROPOGANDA FED TO THE INDIAN PUBLIC HAS NOT TAKEN ROOT HERE. WE DON'T KNOW, BUT WOULD GUESS THAT THE SAME THOUGHTS MIGHT BE PASSING THROUGH THE MINDS OF THE SOVIETS AS IT CLEARLY IS IN THE MINDS, AND PAPERS OF THEIR LOCAL SUPPORTERS, THE CPI.

ROSSELOT

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